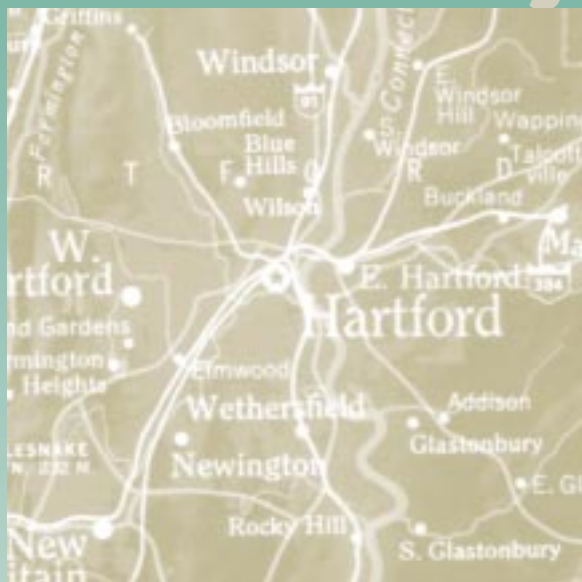




National Evaluation of Weed & Seed

Case Study



Hartford, Connecticut Research Report



Executive Office for Weed & Seed

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National Evaluation of Weed and Seed

Hartford Case Study

RESEARCH REPORT

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Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Case Study Objective and Methodology	2
3.0 Site History and Description	3
3.1 City Characteristics	3
3.2 Target Area Characteristics and Nature of Problems	4
3.3 Other Funding Sources	4
4.0 Program Structure and Chronology	8
4.1 Formal Organization and Structure for Weed and Seed Program	8
4.2 Budgetary Information	9
4.3 Program Milestones	9
4.4 Local Evaluation	9
5.0 Key Implementation Issues and Interpretation	12
5.1 Approach to Weeding	12
5.2 Approach Community Policing	18
5.3 Approach to Seeding	18
6.0 Effects of Weed and Seed	25
6.1 Analysis of Crime Data	25
6.2 Survey of Community Residents	27
6.3 Seeding Program Participant Interviews	52
7.0 Future Directions and Degree of Institutionalization	54
Appendix A	55

List of Exhibits

Exhibit 3.1:	Map of Hartford Weed and Seed Area	5
Exhibit 3.2:	Map of Stowe Village	6
Exhibit 3.3:	Part 1 Crimes per 1,000 Residents	7
Exhibit 4.1:	Hartford Weed and Seed Funding Summary	10
Exhibit 4.2:	Hartford Weed and Seed Project Milestones	11
Exhibit 5.1:	Part 1 Arrests per Capita by Month	15
Exhibit 5.2:	Drug Arrests per Capita by Month	15
Exhibit 5.3:	Disposition of Weed and Seed Arrests	17
Exhibit 6.1:	Part 1 Crimes per Capita by Month	26
Exhibit 6.2:	Part 1 Crime Trends by Census Tract: 1993–1996	28
Exhibit 6.3:	Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents, Hartford	32
Exhibit 6.4:	Perceptions of the Neighborhood, Hartford	35
Exhibit 6.5:	Victimization, Hartford	41
Exhibit 6.6:	Police Response, Hartford	43
Exhibit 6.7:	Community Involvement, Hartford	47
Exhibit 6.8:	Perceptions of Social Services and Other Programs, Hartford	49
Exhibit 6.9:	Perceptions of the Weed and Seed Program, Hartford	51
Appendix A:	Map of Census Tracts Near Stowe Village	55

1.0 Introduction

Unveiled in 1991, Operation Weed and Seed represents an ambitious attempt to improve the quality of life in America's cities. The ultimate goals of Weed and Seed are to control violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime in targeted high-crime neighborhoods and to provide a safe environment, free of crime and drug use, in which law-abiding citizens can live, work, and raise their families. Weed and Seed, administered by the Executive Office for Weed and Seed (EOWS), is grounded in the philosophy that targeted areas can best be improved by a two-pronged strategy of "weeding" out violent offenders, drug traffickers, and other criminals by removing them from the targeted area and "seeding" the area with human services and neighborhood revitalization efforts. Community policing is intended to serve as the "bridge" between weeding and seeding.

Three key objectives emphasize the government-community partnership spirit that is at the heart of Weed and Seed:

1. To **develop a comprehensive, multiagency strategy** to control and prevent violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime in targeted high-crime neighborhoods.
2. To **coordinate and integrate existing and new Federal, State, local, and private sector initiatives, criminal justice efforts, and human services**, concentrating those resources in the project sites to maximize their impact on reducing and preventing violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime.
3. To **mobilize community residents** in the targeted sites to assist law enforcement in identifying and removing violent offenders and drug traffickers from their neighborhoods and to assist other human services agencies in identifying and responding to service needs of the target area.

Weed and Seed sites thus draw on the resources of a variety of agencies at all levels of government, private and other public organizations, and individual community residents.

Specific strategies and program components designed to achieve these three objectives fall into one of four Weed and Seed program elements:

1. **Law enforcement.** Weed and Seed's law enforcement goals are the identification, arrest, prosecution, conviction, and incarceration of narcotics traffickers and violent criminals operating in the target area.
2. **Community policing.** An objective of community policing is to establish mutual trust between law enforcement and the public. This is the bridge between weeding and seeding: law enforcement officials enlist the community's help in identifying patterns of criminal activity and locating perpetrators; simultaneously, police help the community solve problems.

3. **Prevention, intervention, and treatment.** This element of the program is intended to reduce risk factors and to enhance protective factors that are associated with drug abuse, violence, and crime in the target area. “Safe havens” in the target areas typically coordinate the prevention, intervention, and treatment activities.
4. **Neighborhood restoration.** The goal of this element is to enable residents in the target area to improve their community morale, their neighborhood’s physical appearance (buildings, parks, streets, lighting, and so forth), and local economic and business conditions.

An important structural feature of Weed and Seed is the local steering committee. The EOWS requires that each site have a steering committee, formally chaired by the U.S. Attorney for the district in which the site is located, that is responsible for “establishing Weed and Seed’s goals and objectives, designing and developing programs, providing guidance on implementation, and assessing program achievement.”¹

Steering committee members include representatives from key local, State, and Federal agencies, and other stakeholders in the Weed and Seed target area, such as business leaders, tenant association leaders, and other community activists. The requirement to convene a steering committee reflects the EOWS’s belief that, for neighborhood revitalization to work, all key stakeholders must participate in the decisions that affect the target area.

Funded sites were divided into two groups: officially recognized sites and demonstration sites. Officially recognized sites were currently implementing Weed and Seed strategies in their jurisdictions, and had submitted documentation summarizing their strategy to the EOWS but had not yet received full funding from the EOWS. After the EOWS designated a site as “officially recognized,” the site was eligible for demonstration status and full Weed and Seed funding.

2.0 Case Study Objective and Methodology

This case study is one of eight completed for the National Evaluation of Weed and Seed, under the direction of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). In 1994, NIJ selected the following eight sites for the national evaluation:

- Four demonstration sites that first received funding in FY 1994:
 - Hartford, Connecticut
 - Las Vegas, Nevada
 - Sarasota and Manatee Counties, Florida
 - Shreveport, Louisiana

1 Executive Office for Weed and Seed, “Operation Weed and Seed Implementation Manual,” p. 2–1.

- Two demonstration sites awarded continuation funding in FY 1994:
 - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
 - Seattle, Washington
- Two officially recognized sites:
 - Akron, Ohio
 - Salt Lake City, Utah

Four of these sites (Pittsburgh, Salt Lake City, Sarasota/Manatee, and Shreveport) were also recipients of funds from the National Performance Review Laboratory (NPRL).²

This case study documents the activities implemented under the Weed and Seed program in Hartford and assesses the program's impact at this site. The final evaluation report compares the eight sites and presents overall conclusions on the Weed and Seed program.

The evaluation activities undertaken for this case study include: (1) onsite observation of program activities; (2) inperson interviews with program staff, key law enforcement personnel, community leaders, service providers, and participants; (3) review of program documents; (4) a survey of target area residents; and (5) analysis of computerized crime and arrest records provided by the local police department.

3.0 Site History and Description

3.1 City Characteristics

The city of Hartford is located midway between New York and Boston and is the urban hub of Connecticut's capital region. Hartford, which serves as the region's major employment, service, government, and cultural center, covers only 18.2 square miles and has a population of roughly 140,000, making it one of the country's smallest urban areas. Approximately 250,000 to 300,000 people, or roughly twice the population of Hartford, enter the city for some portion of the day for employment, entertainment, or other reasons. The city of Hartford contrasts sharply with the surrounding towns, which are primarily suburban communities with middle to upper income populations. In fact, while the State of Connecticut has the country's highest per capita income, Hartford has for a number of years been one of the Nation's poorest cities in terms of the percentage of residents living below the poverty line.

² The National Performance Review Task Force (now renamed the National Partnership for Reinventing Government) designated a number of governmental organizations or activities as National Performance Review Laboratories (now Reinvention Laboratories) to test "reinventing government" initiatives. These labs have developed more efficient ways to deliver government services by creating new partnerships between entities, streamlining bureaucratic processes, and empowering organizations to make substantial changes. The mission of the Weed and Seed Reinvention Laboratory is to develop more effective mechanisms that combine and deliver Federal, State, and local resources in Weed and Seed sites.

3.2 Target Area Characteristics and Nature of Problems

Hartford's Weed and Seed target area is the Stowe Village public housing development in the city's Northeast neighborhood. Exhibit 3.1 shows the location of Stowe Village within the city. Exhibit 3.2 shows a closeup view of Stowe Village. The boundary of Stowe Village encompasses an area of about one-tenth of a square mile. Within this area, there are 33 buildings—a community center, housing authority offices, and 31 tenant buildings. In the 33 buildings are approximately 550 public housing units. The tenant buildings are either two or three stories, with common entrances and hallways. Approximately 1,300 people live in Stowe Village.

Demographic statistics show that Stowe Village is one of the poorest sections of Hartford, which in turn is one of the poorest cities in the Nation. According to Hartford's 1994 Weed and Seed proposal, only 23 of the roughly 440 adults in Stowe Village (approximately 5.2 percent) were "gainfully employed." Thus, virtually the entire population is dependent on state and Federal assistance programs, such as Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC).

Stowe Village has a tenants' association, which for a variety of reasons, has not been as well organized or as active as many other community organizations in Hartford. One of the Weed and Seed objectives in Hartford has been to increase the effectiveness of this organization.

Through the years, Stowe Village had gained a reputation as one of the city's primary crime centers, with substantial gang and drug activity. Hartford's 1994 Weed and Seed proposal noted that "[at the present time, Stowe Village is a center of operation and, in some instances, residence, for two of the three major gangs operating in Hartford, the Los Solidos and the 20 Love gangs." As shown in exhibit 3.3, crime statistics reflect these perceptions of Stowe Village in the 2 years prior to Weed and Seed. For example, the number of Part 1 crimes per 1,000 residents in 1993, in Stowe Village was 223.8, about 67 percent higher than the city's overall figure and about four and one-half times the national average. The 1993 per capita Part 1 crime rate in Stowe Village was also significantly higher in two other comparable Hartford public housing developments—43 percent higher than in Nelton Court and 94 percent higher than in Dutch Point. (Exhibit 3.3 also shows how the crime rate has dropped in Stowe Village since the start of Weed and Seed. This issue will be discussed later in section 6.)

3.3 Other Funding Sources

A broad array of human service programs and services already existed in Stowe Village prior to Weed and Seed. In fact, one of the important reasons why Stowe Village was selected as the Weed and Seed target areas was the desire to leverage existing and anticipated U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiatives directed toward Stowe Village. Perhaps the most important of these programs was the Family Investment Center. About the time Hartford initially applied for Weed and Seed funding, the Hartford Housing Authority received \$1 million from HUD to develop and operate a Family Investment Center in Stowe Village. Since opening in 1995, the Center has focused on providing education, job training, and employment opportunities for Stowe Village families.

Exhibit 3.1
Hartford Weed and Seed Area

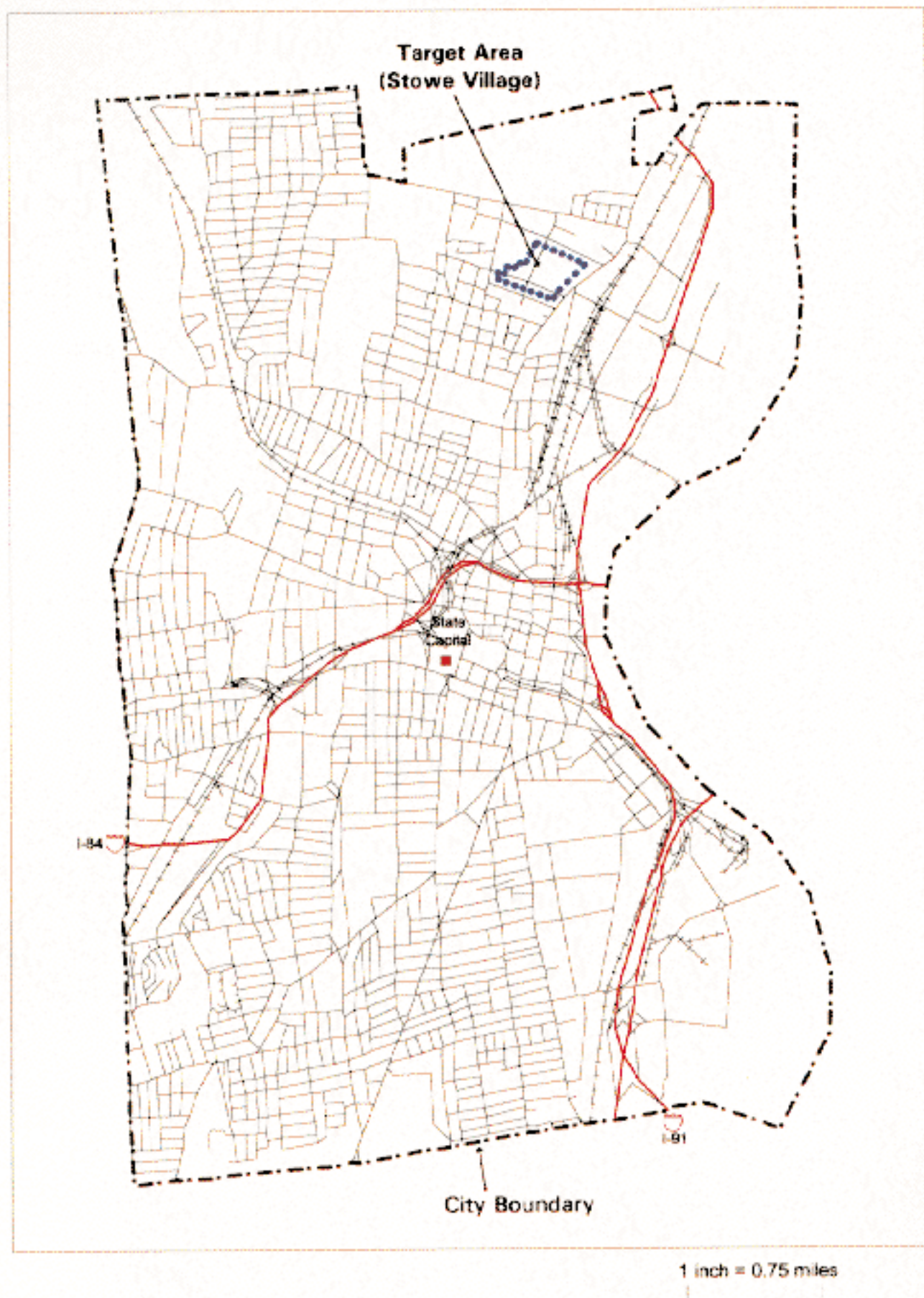


Exhibit 3.2
Map of Stowe Village

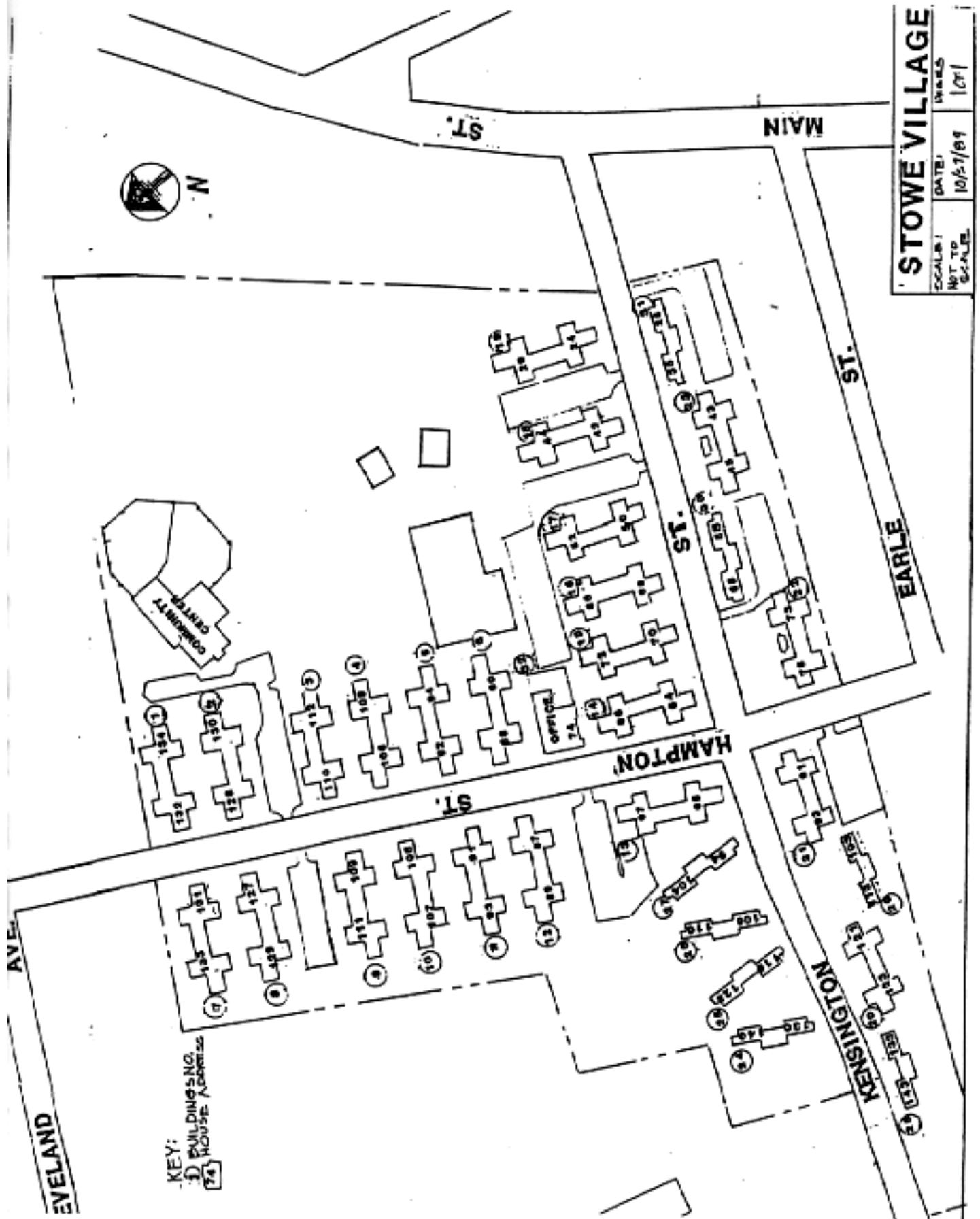
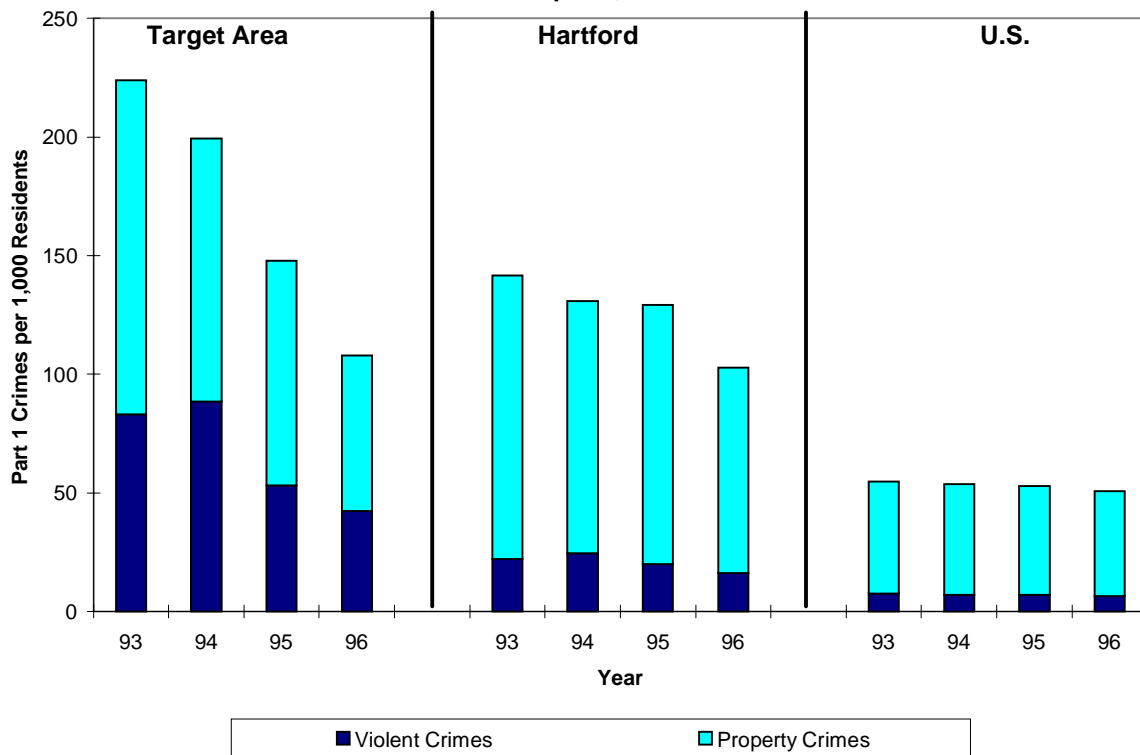


Exhibit 3.3
Part 1 Crimes per 1,000 Residents



Other programs and services offered in Stowe Village include programs funded by the Federal government (e.g., the HUD-funded Drug Elimination Program and employment training programs, Head Start, and Hartford Housing Authority Youth Division programming), the State of Connecticut (e.g., the Mt. Olive Day Care Center), nonprofit organizations (e.g., the United Way's support of the Stowe Village YMCA and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's support of Project MaSH), and private companies (e.g., corporate sponsorship of the B Club).

Two programs that existed in Stowe Village before the start of Weed and Seed received Weed and Seed funds to expand their program offerings. Hartford was one of five cities to receive funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation in 1993 to develop and implement programs designed to reduce teenage pregnancy and prevent HIV and AIDS in youths. With these funds, Plain Talk/Hablando Claro was established in Stowe Village. In addition, the Connecticut Department of Mental Health (DMH) provided initial funding to the Community Mental Health Center in Hartford to provide onsite mental health counseling services in Stowe Village in 1994. The DMH funds were used to assign a full-time staff person to Stowe Village, using space provided by the Hartford Housing Authority.

4.0 Program Structure and Chronology

4.1 Formal Organization and Structure

Hartford's Weed and Seed program has a steering committee, a weed committee, and a seed committee.

- **Weed and Seed steering committee.** Hartford's Weed and Seed steering committee is cochaired by the U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut and the Chief of Police of the Hartford Police Department (HPD). Steering committee meetings are open to the public, and, since November 1995, have been held at the Stowe Village Community Center. Steering committee meetings are primarily occasions in which the key persons involved in Weed and Seed meet and inform each other what they have accomplished and what they are currently working on. The meetings also afford an opportunity for target area residents and other citizens to learn about and get involved in the program.
- **Weeding committee.** The weeding committee meets monthly to review the status of weeding activities and to plan future tactics and strategies. These meetings are not open to the public. Committee members include HPD's Chief of Police and several police supervisors, the U.S. Attorney, and the local FBI Special Agent in Charge. In general, weeding primarily involves a single organization—the HPD, with overall weeding activities coordinated by the Deputy Chief in charge of the North Police Service Area. State and Federal law enforcement resources are involved on an as-needed basis.
- **Seeding committee.** The Coordinator for Human Resources at the Hartford Housing Authority, and former program director of the Stowe Village Family Investment Center, coordinate the seeding activities. The seed coordinator holds monthly meetings with the seeding service providers in Stowe Village, most of whom receive Weed and Seed funds through subcontracts to the Housing Authority. A key purpose of these meetings is to coordinate the activities of the service providers so that they are working together as a team.

The Weed and Seed effort has benefitted from HUD's Operation Safe Homes initiative, which has been operating in Stowe Village since 1995. Safe Homes has a more formal organizational structure than the Weed and Seed effort in Hartford, and has established five subcommittees: public safety, education, employment/training, social services, and youths. There is particular overlap with Weed and Seed on the public safety and social services subcommittees. For example, the chair of the social services subcommittee is also the seed coordinator.

There is no full-time Weed and Seed coordinator in Hartford. Day-to-day decisionmaking authority is exercised primarily by the weed coordinator and the seed coordinator. Strategic decisionmaking authority is shared between the police department, which is the Weed and Seed grantee, and the U.S. Attorney, who has also been instrumental in garnering the support and cooperation of other governmental agencies.

4.2 Budgetary Information

Funding allocations, and in particular awards made to the seeding service providers, are made by HPD, in consultation with the U.S. Attorney and the Hartford Housing Authority. Exhibit 4.1 summarizes Hartford Weed and Seed funding by year, funding source, and programmatic element (FY 1997 funds will not be used until the summer of 1998.) Not reflected in this exhibit are in-kind contributions (particularly from HPD and the Hartford Housing Authority) or other programs in Stowe Village that were not funded by Weed and Seed.

The funding allocation in exhibit 4.1 reflects the dual goals of Hartford's Weed and Seed program—enhancing police presence in Stowe Village and implementing a wide array of seeding programs. Compared to other sites in the national evaluation, Hartford is directing a significantly higher percentage of its Federal award to seeding programs. In addition, the seeding funding has emphasized programmatic initiatives, particularly adult training and employment programs and youth programming, rather than community capacity building. This emphasis seems appropriate, given that Hartford's target area had a near 100-percent unemployment rate prior to Weed and Seed.

4.3 Program Milestones

Exhibit 4.2 lists a number of important funding and programmatic milestones related to Weed and Seed from the time Hartford made its initial application for funding in June 1994. Further details on the programmatic elements are explained later in this report, but this exhibit should provide a historical reference for the project.

As is typical with Federal grant funds awards, there was some delay between the time the city was notified that they had been awarded a Weed and Seed grant from the U.S. Department of Justice (October 1994) and when the various weeding and seeding activities became operational. In January 1995, the Hartford Court of Common Council authorized the City Manager to accept the Federal funds and authorized the awarding of subgrants to the various subcontractors. For example, contracts with the Connecticut Prison Association and Hartford Hospital were executed in June 1995, while contracts with Abt Associates and the Hartford Housing Authority were not executed until September 1995 and October 1995, respectively.

4.4 Local Evaluation

Abt Associates is conducting the local Weed and Seed evaluation in Hartford. Two year-end reports have been completed to date, with a third report to be delivered in July 1998.

The local evaluation has three components. First, a qualitative assessment of Weed and Seed program activities is conducted. This was carried out through regular onsite and telephone interviews with personnel from the Hartford Police Department, the U.S. Attorney's Office, other law enforcement agencies, the Hartford Housing Authority, the many Stowe Village service providers, the Stowe Village Tenants Association and other resident organizations. Evaluation staff also attended Weed and Seed steering committee and Operation Safe Homes meetings in Hartford.

Exhibit 4.1
Hartford Weed and Seed Funding Summary

	FY 1994	FY 1995	FY 1996
Total Funding	\$683,424	\$750,000	\$790,000
Funding by Source			
EOWS/BJA	\$455,616	\$500,000	\$540,000
Asset Forfeiture	\$227,808	\$250,000	\$250,000
<i>Total</i>	<u>\$683,424</u>	<u>\$750,000</u>	<u>\$790,000</u>
Funding by Programmatic Element			
Weeding			
HPD Enforcement (Overtime)	\$187,498	\$184,500	\$179,500
Enforcement Equipment	\$38,463	\$65,500	\$70,500
Other	\$1,847	\$0	\$0
<i>Total Weeding</i>	<u>\$227,808</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>
Seeding			
Connecticut Prison Association	\$67,500	\$69,000	\$69,000
Hartford Hospital	\$18,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Girls Soccer League	\$0	\$24,000	\$21,000
Biking Program (Girls-yr 1,2; Boys-yr 3)	\$4,663	\$4,024	\$20,000
Wish School	\$0	\$0	\$72,000
Hartford Housing Authority			
Plain Talk	\$46,000	\$50,000	\$53,000
Mushaba Force Foundation	\$5,000	\$15,000	\$17,000
Community Mental Health Center	\$46,000	\$50,000	\$52,000
Urban League	\$46,500	\$75,000	\$75,000
Latchkey Program	\$140,000	\$44,000	\$20,000
ONE/CHANE	\$23,000	\$25,000	\$5,000
Building Captain Program	\$19,530	\$27,600	\$22,000
Knox Foundation	\$0	\$0	\$17,000
Gardening/Beautification	\$0	\$6,400	\$0
Administration	\$6,916	\$20,000	\$10,000
<i>Total Seeding</i>	<u>\$423,109</u>	<u>\$435,024</u>	<u>\$478,000</u>
Other			
Travel/Misc. Supplies/Other	\$2,507	\$39,976	\$36,000
Evaluation	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$26,000
<i>Total Other</i>	<u>\$32,507</u>	<u>\$64,976</u>	<u>\$62,000</u>

Exhibit 4.2

Hartford Weed and Seed Project Milestones

Date	Funding Milestone	Programmatic Milestone
1994 June	FY 1994 W&S Application Submitted	
July		
August		Monthly Safe Homes meetings begin
September		
October	Notification of FY 1994 award	
November		
December		
1995 January	City Council accepts FY 1994 award	First "official" Weed and Seed enforcement action
February		Family Investment Center (FIC) funded
March		Federal grand jury indicts 38 Stowe Village gang members
April		
May		Public "kick off" of Weed and Seed in Stowe Village
June		Opening of Stowe Village police office
July		FIC opens
August	FY 1995 W&S application submitted	
September		
October		Number of families with signed contract at FIC reaches 50
November		Adams Health Clinic opens in Stowe Village
December	Notification of FY 1995 award	Steering Committee meetings move to Stowe Village
		Vehicular barriers installed in Stowe Village
		Number of families with signed contract at FIC reaches 200
1996 January		
February	City Council accepts FY 1995 award	
March		Stowe Village computer lab opened
April		
May		Outdoor Health Fair held at Stowe Village
June		Tenant Association holds elections; new leaders elected
July		Building Captain Program started
August	FY 1996 W&S application submitted; target area expanded to Unity Plaza	Department of Social Services opens Stowe Village office
September		HPD's Summer Youth Academy featured in local newspapers
October	Notification of FY 1996 award	Stowe Village Newsletter produced at computer lab
November		120 attend Weed and Seed Steering Committee meeting
December		City awarded HUD funds to demolish part of Stowe Village
1997 January		
February		
March	City Council accepts FY 1996 award	
April		
May	FY 1997 W&S application submitted	125 attend Weed and Seed Steering Committee meeting
June		Outdoor Health Fair held in Stowe Village
July		
August		
September		
October	Notification of FY 1997 award	

Second, surveys of Stowe Village youths were conducted in the spring of 1996 and 1997. In each survey, approximately 100 youths were questioned about awareness and participation in Stowe Village programs and services, attitudes toward school, and perceptions of safety and quality of life. Both surveys employed a non-random, opportunistic methodology.

Third, analyses were conducted of computerized police department data, including calls for service, reported crimes, and arrests. For these analyses, the Hartford Police Department provided tapes containing details of each call for service, reported crime, and arrest occurring in the city since January 1, 1993, which is 2 years prior to the start of Weed and Seed.

The third year-end local evaluation report will focus on the impact of Weed and Seed in Stowe Village.

5.0 Key Implementation Issues and Interpretation

5.1 Approach to Weeding

The Hartford Police Department (HPD) has overall responsibility for the weeding activities in Stowe Village. In that role, they have utilized a variety of department resources, including the patrol division, the vice and narcotics division, the community service officer unit, the mounted patrol unit, and the traffic enforcement unit. There is no “Weed and Seed Unit” within HPD, as police resources assigned to Stowe Village have remained in their organizational unit. In addition, Federal and State law enforcement agencies have participated in specific weeding activities in Stowe Village. For example, a few arrests involving weapons charges have been referred to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Defining the start date of weeding activities can be somewhat arbitrary since Stowe Village has always had significant police presence. For example, in December 1994, an extensive enforcement effort that targeted gangs, violent crime, and drug activity was carried out in Stowe Village. However, the first “official” Weed and Seed enforcement action began in January 1995, when the vice and narcotics division launched an extensive undercover operation in Stowe Village. Vice and narcotics detectives conducted a series of surveillance and undercover buy operations, with the goal of identifying and obtaining warrants on as many drug sellers in Stowe Village as possible. Ultimately, detectives served many arrest warrants in March 1995 as a result of the operation.

Also in March 1995, a Federal grand jury returned an 85-count indictment against 38 persons alleged to be members of the Los Solidos gang, one of the major crime organizations in Hartford, whose operations were centered in Stowe Village. The indictment was read following the arrest of six alleged Los Solidos gang members, which resulted from a cooperative effort of Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

Police presence

Through the use of Weed and Seed funds and through in-kind contributions from HPD, there has been an increase in police presence in Stowe Village, as summarized in the following chart:

Component	Primary Responsibility	Prior to Weed and Seed	Additional Coverage for Weed and Seed
Patrol officer	Responding to calls for service	1 1-officer car 24 hours/day, 365 days/year, assigned to roughly half of the Northeast neighborhood	None
Walking beat officer	Problem solving; responding to calls for service	1 2-officer team 16 hours/day, 244 days/year, assigned to just Stowe Village	Overtime funds used to extend hours of walking beat team or supplement team with additional officers
Community Service Officer	Liaison between police and community; problem solving	1 officer assigned to entire Northeast neighborhood	1 officer assigned to just Stowe Village; overtime funds used to extend shift
Other specialized units	Varies according to unit	Unknown	Unknown; overtime funds used to field units in Stowe Village

As shown in exhibit 4.1, approximately \$180,000 from each Weed and Seed grant has been used to increase police presence in Stowe Village through the use of overtime for the Stowe Village beat officers, community service officers (CSO), vice and narcotics detectives, and other specialized units. According to HPD, these funds have supported an additional 40 to 80 officer-hours in Stowe Village per week.

Police presence in Stowe Village has been further enhanced through the opening in May 1995 of a police substation at a central location in Stowe Village. The CSO, beat officers, and patrol officers use the substation as office space, a place to meet with residents, and as a place to question suspects. The substation is also used for meetings and other community functions.

Tactics

The most intensive weeding efforts were carried out during the first 6 to 8 months of the project (starting in January 1995). Following the completion of the initial undercover operation in March 1995, detectives from HPD's vice and narcotics division continued special operations (surveillance, reverse sting operations, and executions of search warrants) in Stowe Village through the middle of

August 1995. Based on information in HPD's Weed and Seed log books, 20 of these operations were conducted between January and August 1995. Of these, 13 resulted in at least 1 arrest, 10 resulted in multiple arrests, and 4 resulted in 10 or more arrests. Many of these operations targeted major gang leaders and drug operations. One surveillance operation in May 1995 netted 500 bags of heroin and four arrests, including a major drug dealer and gang leader living in Stowe Village.

After the completion of the March 1995 undercover operation, HPD also embarked on a "second phase" of weeding that focused on conducting high visibility patrol operations. This involved the beat officers and CSO assigned to Stowe Village working extended shifts and other specialized units within HPD (e.g., mounted patrol unit, traffic enforcement unit) being assigned to Stowe Village on an as-needed basis.

Since the summer of 1995, HPD has continued an emphasis on high visibility patrol. The HPD views this as a highly successful strategy (based in part of the reduction in crime in Stowe Village—see section 6) and sees no reason to make significant changes in tactics. Vice and narcotics detectives have conducted a few special operations since August 1995, mostly from January to April 1996.

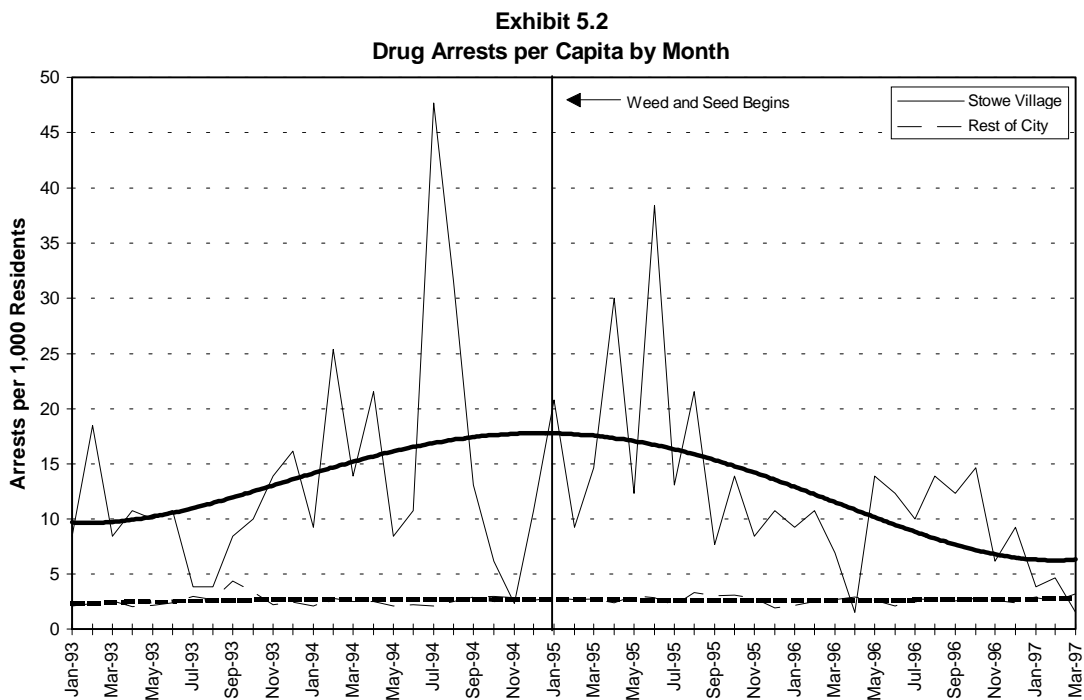
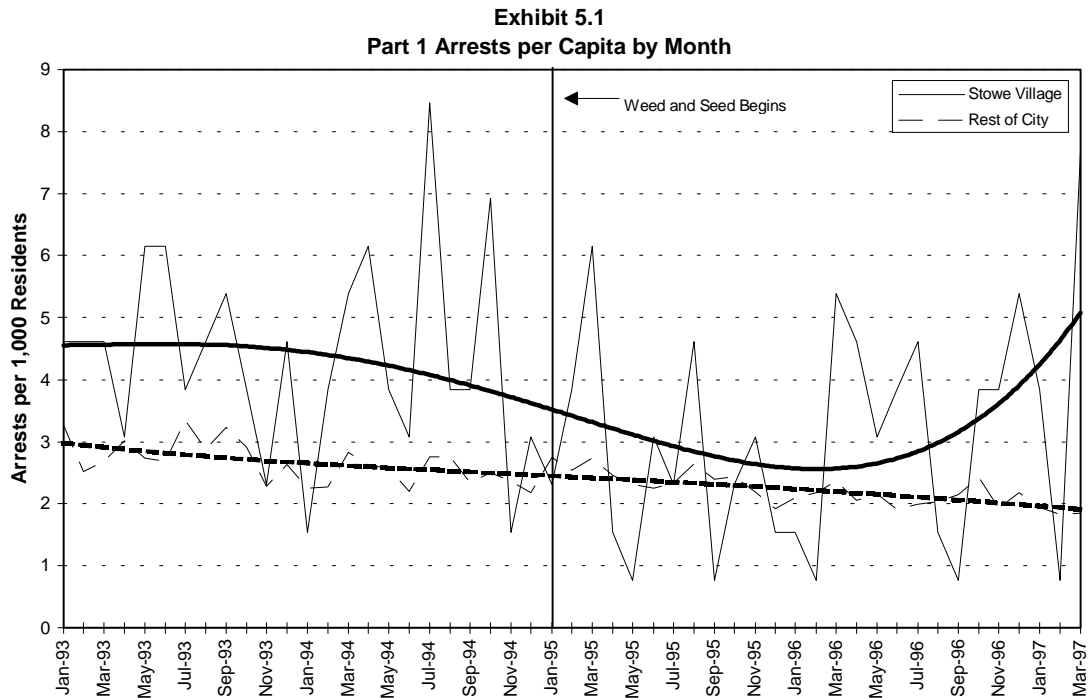
An additional tactic should be noted. In early December 1995, after months of planning and discussions, vehicular barriers were erected in Stowe Village that blocked three of the four entrances to Stowe Village. Vehicles can now enter Stowe Village only by traveling westbound on Kensington Street (see the map in exhibit 3.2). The primary motivation for installing the barriers was to discourage persons living outside Stowe Village from driving to Stowe Village to purchase drugs or commit other crimes. After the barriers were first installed, community response to the barriers was mixed. Some residents commented that they appreciate the reduction in traffic. Others have explicitly stated that they think the barriers have helped reduce the level of drug activity in Stowe Village. For others, the barriers have fueled resentment toward the city. At one steering committee meeting, one resident complained that "we are being caged in; now our children will expect to be caged in from now on." In addition, residents have complained about the disruption to bus routes, the difficulty emergency vehicles have had getting into Stowe Village, and the ugly appearance of the barriers. The appearance of the barriers has been somewhat improved by having shrubbery planted in and around these barriers. In any event, the barriers will remain one of the most visible signs of the Weed and Seed program.

Weed and Seed arrests

For the purposes of this report, a Weed and Seed arrest is defined as any arrest made in the Weed and Seed target area. To determine the number of arrests made in Stowe Village and how that number has changed over time, we requested from HPD computerized arrest records dating from January 1993 (2 years prior to the start of Weed and Seed). We then used the address where the arrest was made to determine if the arrest was made in Stowe Village. We also examined arrests in the area immediately surrounding Stowe Village (referred to as the "catchment area"—see the map in appendix A), other Hartford public housing developments, and the city as a whole.

Exhibit 5.1 shows the number of arrests (persons arrested) for Part 1 crimes made in Stowe Village and in the rest of the city per 1,000 residents by month from January 1993 to March 1997. Exhibit

5.2 shows the corresponding numbers for drug arrests. The midpoint of these graphs, January 1995, is when Weed and Seed started in Stowe Village. In both graphs, “best fit” curves have been superimposed to show the overall trend.



The graph of Part 1 arrests shows a drop in the arrest rate over the first year of Weed and Seed (42 arrests in 1995 compared to 67 in 1994), and then an increase over the second year (51 in 1996 compared to 42 in 1995). The trends in drug arrests are clear, and show rapidly falling rates over the second year of Weed and Seed, almost to the point where the drug arrest rate in Stowe Village is comparable to the rate for the rest of the city. The number of drug arrests in Stowe Village dropped from 261 in 1995 to 157 in 1996, a 40-percent reduction.

Perhaps what is most notable about Stowe Village arrest trends are the wide variations in month-to-month arrest totals over the past 4 years. In Stowe Village, there are a few months with exceptionally high-arrest totals. A closer look at the arrest data show that these spikes are due primarily to large numbers of arrests on a single day of the month, most likely due to a massive police sweep or raid. For example, in July 1994, the month with the single highest total of all arrests (including Part 1 and drug arrests), 69 of the 97 arrests were made over 3 days. In April and June 1995, the 2 months with the highest totals during the Weed and Seed effort, 8 days accounted for 62 arrests (41 percent of the arrests were made during 13 percent of days). Overall, the number of days in which 10 or more arrests were made in a single day in Stowe Village was 5 in 1993, 10 in 1994, 4 in 1995, 1 in 1996, and, as of the end of March, 0 in 1997.

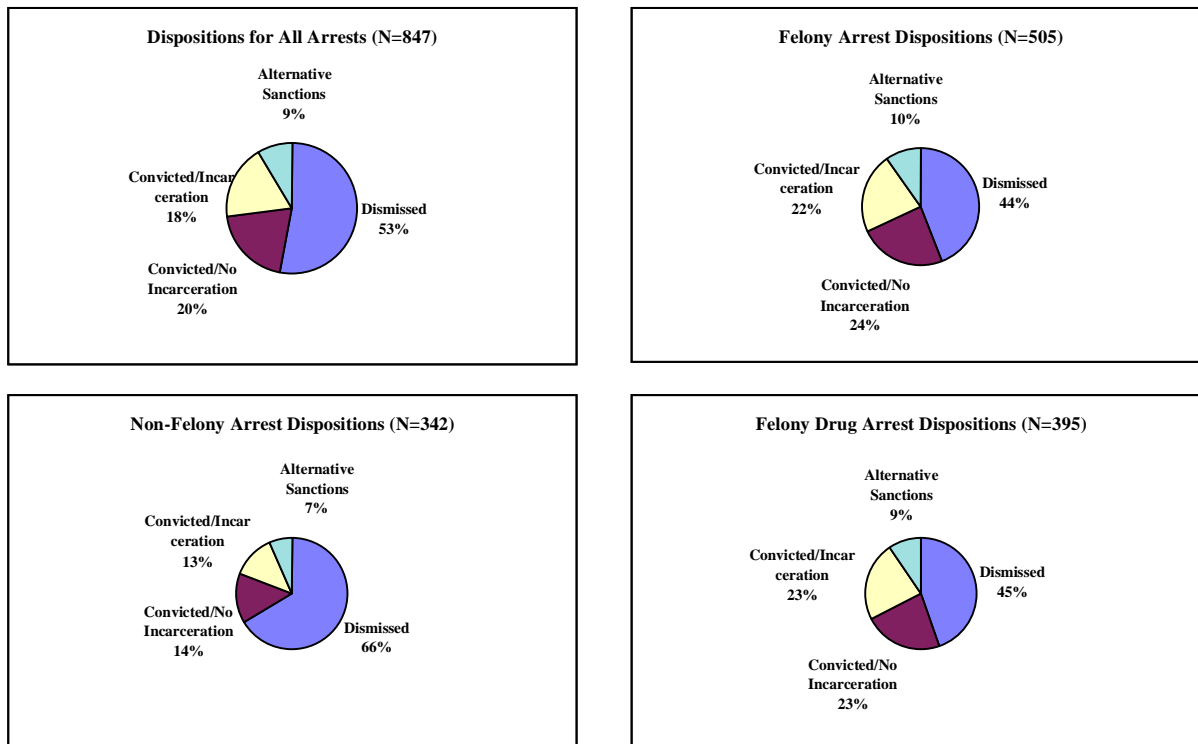
Interestingly, all 4 of the “10 or more arrest days” in 1995 resulted from special operations by the vice and narcotics division—two from serving warrants and two from reverse sting operations. In fact, one factor that helps explain the drop in the number of “mass arrest days” is that vice and narcotics special operations have yielded fewer arrests in 1996 compared to 1995. Of the 20 special operations conducted in 1995, 4 resulted in 10 or more arrests, as noted above. Thirteen of the 20 (65 percent) resulted in at least 1 arrest. In 1996, a higher percentage of the special operations resulted in at least 1 arrest—of the nine conducted, seven (78 percent) resulted in at least one arrest. However, none of the 9 special operations conducted in 1996 resulted in 10 or more arrests. This provides some statistical evidence that, on the whole, drug dealing in Stowe Village is being conducted on a much smaller scale than before. This finding is consistent with comments by Hartford police personnel regarding the drug dealing situation in Stowe Village.

Prosecution of Weed and Seed arrests

As of mid-1997, nearly all Weed and Seed arrests have been referred to the Hartford State’s Attorney. Ten Weed and Seed arrests have been or were in the process of being prosecuted at the Federal level. These Federal-level cases have involved major Stowe Village gang leaders and drug dealers, so the importance of these arrests should not be underestimated. In particular, two of the gang leaders prosecuted in March 1995 are currently serving 10-year prison sentences.

For Weed and Seed cases referred to the State’s attorney, HPD’s crime analysis unit tracks the status of each arrest. As of June 1997, 612 Weed and Seed arrests had been disposed. Exhibit 5.3 shows the disposition of four categories of Weed and Seed arrests—all arrests, felony arrests (arrests involving at least one felony charge), nonfelony arrests (arrests involving only misdemeanor charges), and felony drug arrests (arrests involving at least one felony drug charge). In total, slightly more than half (53 percent) of all Weed and Seed arrests are dismissed. Only 18 percent of arrests resulted in the incarceration of the offender. Forty-four percent of felony arrests are dismissed

Exhibit 5.3 Disposition of Weed and Seed Arrests



Based on arrests made through June 1997

(compared to 66 percent of misdemeanor arrests). Twenty-two percent of felony arrests result in an incarceration (compared to 13 percent of misdemeanor arrests). For those felony arrests that did result in an incarceration (N=113), 39 percent received a sentence of less than 2 years, 40 percent received a sentence of 2 years or more but less than 5 years, and 21 percent received a sentence of 5 years or more. Finally, the disposition distribution for felony drug arrests is nearly identical to that for all felony arrests.

The percentage of arrests that result in dismissal is clearly high. The question is how this percentage compares to non-Weed and Seed arrests in Hartford. Data on the prosecution of all Hartford arrests have not been examined for this evaluation, so we cannot assess whether or not the disposition of Weed and Seed arrests is substantially different from non-Weed and Seed arrests. However, if we were to examine the dispositions of other sets of arrests, in all likelihood we would find similar disposition statistics, particularly for felony cases—according to personnel from the State’s attorney’s office “a serious case is a serious case” and how it is handled does not depend on the location the arrest was made.

While there is no difference in the handling of serious cases and no vertical prosecution of Weed and Seed cases, it is nevertheless important to recognize steps taken to enhance the prosecution of Weed and Seed arrests. The most important step is that communication between the State’s attorney’s office and HPD has, according to both offices, improved over the past year, especially with regard to alerting the State’s attorney as to which cases are particularly important. Also, HPD officials are pleasantly surprised that they have been receiving telephone calls from the State’s